

***DOE Commission  
on Fire Safety and  
Preparedness***

**Sub Committee #2 – Fire Protection  
Systems and Code Compliance  
Conference Call #3  
Key Discussion Items and Notes  
March 19, 2001**

**Key Discussion Items and Notes**

The following is a brief summary of **key discussion items** from the third conference call of Subcommittee #2 – Fire Protection Systems and Code Compliance, held March 19, 2001. Conference call participants are listed at the end of these notes. Dan Arnold chaired the conference call.

There will be **no conference call** of the Subcommittee **before the April 23 Full Commission Meeting**.

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**Key Discussion Items:**

- Frank Russo spoke to four key items before the Subcommittee began their discussions. Items were:
  - The Draft Agenda for the next full committee meeting scheduled April 23, 2001 in Augusta Georgia in conjunction with the DOE Fire Protection Workshop, and the tour of Savannah River Site (SRS).
  - Site Visit to Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) in New Mexico.
  - Comments on the Department of Energy Facility Fire Safety Review Draft Evaluation Plan.
  - Update on controlled burn at Y-12 Oak Ridge site.
- See discussion notes below for details.
- Dan Arnold, the Subcommittee Chair, put forth an agenda on how to review DOE's Draft Evaluation Plan. He suggested discussing the process covered under the methodology portion of the Draft Plan, then reviewing Performance Objectives #3, #4 and parts of #2 as they pertain to this Subcommittee's areas of concern.

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**Next Steps** of The Subcommittee were discussed as follows:

- Subcommittee Members are requested to provide comments on the Draft Evaluation Plan to Subcommittee Chair by March 26 and Chair will consolidate and forward to Frank by March 30.
- Make travel arrangements with Alvensa Travel (888) 293-6165 and Hotel arrangement with the Sheraton Augusta (706) 855-8100 for Second Public Meeting in Augusta, GA.
- Set up a call with LANL and send revised Agenda of LANL visit to all Subcommittee members.

## **Discussion Notes.**

### **• Agenda Items Discussions:**

#### **1. April 23 Second Public Meeting**

**Attendees at April 23<sup>rd</sup> Second Public Meeting include:** Steve Cozen (colleague Bob Bass), Jack Snell (colleague Dave Evans), Dan Arnold, Paul Croce, Eric Lamar, Debra McBaugh, Lorlee Mizell, Tony O'Neill, John Till, and Andrea Tuttle.

**Those not attending the April 23<sup>rd</sup> Second Public Meeting include:** Jessie Roberson, Kathleen Almand, Garry Briese, Ken Burris, Michael Freeman, and Eleanor Towns.

The goal of the Second Public Meeting is to learn about DOE program office activities, mission, hazards, and protection schemes. There will be representatives from DOE Headquarters from the Office of Environmental Management, Office of Science, Defense Programs, Office of Environment, Safety and Health, and the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board. There will be Q&A period, and time for fulfilling Commission activities and goals.

#### **2. Savannah River Site (SRS) Complex**

- The day following the Second Public Meeting, Commission Members have been invited to participate in a tour of the Savannah River Site (SRS Complex).
- The tour will visit the following facilities: SRS Operations Center; Savannah River Ecology Laboratory; USDA Forest Service-Savannah River, Emergency Operations Center; Alternate EOC, N-Area Fire Station, Tour of Prescribed Burn Areas, Fire Alarm Systems Training Lab at Aiken Tech Institute.

#### **3. Los Alamos National Laboratory Site Visit (LANL)**

##### **Travel and Agenda**

- There is a planned visit to LANL for interested Commission Members for May 21-24, 2001.
- Reservations may be made by April 20<sup>th</sup> at the Hotel Loretto in Santa Fe at the government rate of \$90.00 for May 21-24, 800-727-5531.
- DOE will badge members at hotel after 1pm so an ID must be provided.
- The following information pertains:  
Agenda: Monday, May 21, is a Travel day. That night is reserved for, logistics (badging, etc.) and site orientation. Tuesday, May 22, there will be a Briefing on the LANL Fire Protection Program; Cerro Grande Fire lessons learned, post-fire emergency preparedness enhancements, ongoing site fire safety initiatives, and critical (fire safety) issues. Tuesday evening there will be a tour of fire damage, recovery and remediation activities. Wednesday, May 23, TA-53 (Beam line), visit LANL Fire Station 1. Wednesday evening, TA-48 (Radionuclide Facility), TA-3 Building 66 (Sigma Building). Thursday, May 24, TA-18 (Plutonium Storage) at LANL TA-55. Thursday evening is reserved for travel. The Agenda will be finalized and will include additional meetings as suggested by Subcommittee members.
- These areas at LANL were chosen to reveal diversity of mission and hazards and comprehensive features.

##### **Subcommittee #4 Comments on LANL visit:**

- This Subcommittee expressed a desire to interact and to coordinate with local government officials to get full perception of fire incident problems.
- This Subcommittee suggests talking with John Parker of the New Mexico Fire

Department regarding follow-on activities. Some areas of interest include: Integrated Fire Risk Analysis Team (IFRAT), the lab, the Department of Health, etc. Subcommittee #4 needs to hear concerns outside lab with respect to fire, but we also need to balance other subcommittee's interests.

- One of the aspects the Subcommittee is addressing is to consider not just fires within the boundaries of the facility, but also fires outside the facility boundaries.
- All agreed that the Commission's visit is important to communities and how fire is being addressed is very important to Los Alamos. The Commission would like to set up some time to talk with communities, but this cannot be a Public Meeting. Dick Burik, who works for John Brown (Associate Director of the Lab) is Director of Operations at Los Alamos.
- DOE will talk with colleagues first and will try to schedule a conference call with Los Alamos to request inclusion of a community visit.

#### **4. Comments on Draft Evaluation Plan**

- Comments on DRAFT Evaluation Plan should be consolidated by each Subcommittee Chair and **submitted to Frank Russo by March 30.**
- There was discussion on assuring that the process encompasses all parties involved in the implementation of the fire safety program, including workers and contractors.
- Subcommittee suggested that the review include random sites as well as those selected from the scoping visit.
- The Subcommittee suggested that the process include talking to welders, operators, etc. (i.e. where the "rubber meets the road") and not just planners, managers and fire protection personnel.
- There was discussion on how subcontractors are held accountable for carrying out DOE requirements. It was acknowledged that the trend to privatization and outsourcing can lead to lack of sustained corporate safety knowledge and focus. The Commission should deal with this issue.
- This Subcommittee was overwhelmed by reference documents and standards to be followed, so contractors must be as well. Explore this in the Implementation to see how contractors respond to these requirements and how they may overlap. The approach should assess all involved, walking thru a project or modification to illustrate the knowledge and process. The DOE suggests taking a slice and looking at entire work packages including contractors and subcontractors.
- A review of Accountability focus needs to be better defined in the Plan to assess contractor performance and ramifications of failure to comply. It was acknowledged that accountability is tough to assess, but the review should be process-oriented. The Plan should evaluate a sub-contractor's awareness of responsibilities and how they carry out their responsibilities. A definite measurement of accountability is necessary.
- DOE stated that the Integrated Safety Management (ISM) process defines those requirements, but they are often misunderstood when passed to subcontractors.
- Avoid dealing only with higher-level incidents to the obscuration of minor items that reflect a pattern or recurrence. Use history of fires or near fires to discover trends or issues of significance. Review team should look for patterns.
- The DOE believes this is stated in context of which sites will be visited.
- DOE has scheduled 8 scoping visits over 13 weeks and may have to run 2 teams together. This may be a multiple year process. Scoping visits will begin in May and finish by January -February of 2002.

**Performance Objectives and Evaluation Criteria:**

- The Subcommittee Members agreed that the Draft Evaluation Plan was thorough and the group's recommendations reflected enhancements.
- Objectives 3 and 4 in the Plan that are relevant to this Subcommittee can be found on pages 9,10,11.

**5. Oak Ridge Y-12 Incident Update**

Frank provided the Subcommittee with an update of his visit to the Oak Ridge Y-12 site and results of his inquiry into a recent controlled burn incident. His report is summarized below:

- The incident took place on February 8 at Oak Ridge Y-12 where a subcontractor was building a landfill and doing clearing & grubbing operations. There were 5 piles burning, and a couple piles on the ridgeline had embers get into woodland and created about a 2-acre brush fire. Response activities were very good and there was no serious damage. The Activity Hazard Analysis did not address having water trucks on site.
- A lot of players were involved with many responsibilities, but some roles were not well defined. The Oakridge Forest Management Group should have been consulted and was not. In response to the fire, the subcontractor sent bulldozer operators to cut firebreaks before the Incident Commander was on site and without PPE or proper training.
- The Activity Hazard Analysis did not identify a required clear space or buffer and there was no analysis of weather or wind directions. Also, proper training or defined job responsibilities were not indicated. The day prior, Oakridge facility representative did not have fire watches, however, when this event occurred they were in place, but had collateral duties assigned. When Incident Command from Y-12 showed up, responders worked well to contain the fire.
- The National Weather Service provided forecasts to the EOC but not to the incident scene.
- It was determined that the clearing and grubbing operation not fall under the Moratorium. In the future, additional guidance for prescribed vs. operational burns should be provided to assure proper safeguards are in place via the Hazards Analysis.
- There was some confusion on prescribed vs. controlled vs. operational burns. Regardless of the purpose, each operation must take proper precautions.
- Lessons Learned will be issued by the Secretary as guidance to alleviate confusion.
- Frank will get a detailed report regarding the Y-12 incident to Commission Members when it is made final.

***Next Conference Call***

There will be **no conference call** of the Subcommittee **before the April 23 Full Commission Meeting.**

## *Conference Call Participants*

- Commission Members:
  - Dan Arnold
  - Dr. Paul Croce
  - Tony O'Neill
  - Kathleen Almand
- U.S. Department of Energy
  - Frank Russo, Designated Federal Official
  - Barbie Harshman, Federal Assistant
  - Dennis Kubicki, Senior Fire Protection Engineer
- RPI
  - Bill Hamilton
  - Melinda Watters